

form and show careful editing. It may be that the literature in the last few months has been so voluminous that the editors have not been able successfully to cope with its bulk; still the reader who subscribes to this series does so with the idea of adding to his stock of knowledge of established facts and theories rather than further to confuse the great mass of conflicting opinions and evidence that bewilders the faithful reader of current medical literature. In brief, this last volume is at best a leaky filter for the stream of modern medical and near-medical thought; therefore its dependability as a source of clear and definite judgment is decidedly lacking.

G. H. T.

Laboratory Methods, With Special Reference to the Needs of General Practitioner. By B. G. R. Williams, M. D., and E. C. Williams, M. D. Published by C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1912. Price \$2.00.

The average "general practitioner who desires to make, easily and inexpensively, examinations on which he may depend," will find this book a most useful guide, not only in the country, but in the city as well. There are many men, fairly well trained, who never do any laboratory work, because, if we accept their excuses, (1) it is the work of specialists, (2) it is far too complicated and difficult, (3) it takes too much time, (4) it requires a well equipped and expensive laboratory. Reading this small book will convince these gentlemen of the weakness of their excuses. It will teach them a simple method, a reliable one at that, of doing every laboratory test commonly employed and of clinical value. It includes such chapters as "Essence of Tissue Diagnosis," "Detection of Common Poisons," "Milk and Its Home Modifications," "Technic of the Private Post-Mortem," etc. To the laboratory worker or the physician accustomed to complicated methods, bacteriological, chemical and pathological, acquired in recent courses as given in our best schools, this book has necessarily nothing to offer.

R. B.

The Parasitic Amoebae of Man. Charles F. Craig, M. D., Captain, Medical Corps, U. S. A. J. P. Lippincott Co. Philadelphia and London. 1911. Price \$2.50.

BOOKS

The literature bearing on the work of former investigators has been adequately reviewed by the author, and is accompanied by a quite complete number of references. His writings are simple and clear, and especially commendable for their exactness and detail. His chapter on "Technique," as well as his very complete description of the "Amoebae of the Intestinal Tract," are especially commendable; the illustrations are satisfactory. Doubt may be expressed by some equally experienced investigators as to whether our knowledge yet justifies such positive statements as to species, as his chapter on "Classification and Nomenclature" would imply. It would appear that more space has been devoted by the author to recording his disagreement with the opinions of other investigators than a work of this character would absolutely require. While apparently doubting, if not actually disbelieving the claim that parasitic amoebae can be cultivated, the author presents and discusses the works of other investigators, and in doing so apparently shows slight inconsistency by rejecting, in all parts of his book, the cultural claims of certain investigators, in part on morphological grounds, but in the same chapter "protest against the growing tendency of drawing conclusions regarding the morphology and life cycle of the parasitic amoebae as observed in man from organisms growing upon artificial culture media," for the reason that the "appearance of the amoebae in such cultures would probably be erroneous, as it is well known that the cultural forms of pro-

tozoa . . . differ markedly in their morphology and life history from the forms observed in the human host." From his own presentation of the evidence, it would appear that his conclusion, "The entire subject of the cultivation of the parasitic amoebae is in a chaotic condition," is entirely justified, but in the face of this opinion, the author himself appears to have drawn a more positive conclusion on the subject than the chaotic state of the evidence would justify. Taken as a whole, this work is an excellent contribution to the subject treated, and will be found invaluable to all persons interested in the amoebae.

D. H. C.

Principles and Practice of Physical Diagnosis. By John C. DaCosta, Jr. Second Edition. W. B. Saunders Co. Philadelphia and London. 1911.

This book might more properly be entitled "The Pathology and Diagnosis of the Diseases of the Heart and Lungs." After some 60 pages on general methods and technic, the bulk of the book is given up to the thorax and its viscera. This section is well written, concise and interesting as the author seems to be at home in his subject. There are several photographs of actual cases which well illustrate the first chapter.

The following short section on the abdomen is not in proportion to the rest of the book, and in subsequent editions it should be either strengthened or left out. For instance, pneumoconiosis is given three pages, almost entirely on the pathology, while on page 496, the x-ray examination of the stomach is dismissed with nine lines and a plate erroneously labeled "Hour-glass stomach." Now that we know the safety of the oxychloride and subcarbonate of bismuth it is surprising to see in a new book that we are to use "A pint of kefir, etc., with 1 oz. of 'bismuth' and that the mixture should be siphoned out after the examination so as to prevent toxic symptoms." The author is plainly not conversant with the great value of the six, twenty-four and forty-eight hour pictures in determining the motility of the stomach and intestines.

Although it may be true that "The average internist cannot hope, nor does he desire, to have more than a bowing acquaintance with x-ray technic," we believe that the younger men looking forward to a career in internal medicine will be greatly handicapped in later years if they do not now learn something of the technic of radiography as well as the interpretation of plates. If the author had been more conversant with the newer physiology and pathology of the stomach we might have been spared the surface topography diagrams on pp. 493 and 504. There we see the horizontal school-physiology stomach with the fundus covered by the ribs and the pylorus stuck over onto the tip of the eighth rib. The diagrams of gastretasis, gastropnoia and hour glass stomach are rather amusing after the published work of Holzknacht, Groedel, Hertz and others.

The author is much given to remembering the names of the originators in medicine and this is a good book to turn to to find what is Brown's sign or Jones' point. It is rather amusing, however, to find Clado and Morris crowding McBurney off his point. They carefully start from different places but all arrive at about the same spot. A careful search of the literature would undoubtedly reveal more contestants. James Jackson, for instance, clearly described this point in 1855. (Letters to a Young Physician, p. 249.)

It would seem that we have enough good books of this type, of interest mainly to under-graduates, and what we now need in America are good monographs by masters in the different fields. Medicine has widened out so much and the advances are so rapid that one man cannot hope to write a book that will cover the whole field of diagnosis evenly and with life in every section.

W. C. A.